

Front Page Edit Page Other Page

SHREVEPORT, LA.
JOURNAL

JUN 25 1968
E-44,752

The Three Spies

Those who scoff at the danger of Soviet penetration and espionage — and it is fashionable in these times to do so — should read *The Philby Conspiracy*, the true story of how Kim Philby and two other Englishmen, David Maclean and Guy Burgess, betrayed Britain and to a great extent the whole free world to their Soviet masters in Moscow.

It is a story at once more chilling and shocking than any spy fiction ever written. The authors are Bruce Page, David Leitch and Phillip Knightley, all of whom work for the Sunday Times in London and who are, along with 13 other newsmen, part of that newspaper's famous "Insight Team" which spent months interviewing anybody acquainted with Philby in a social or business way.

Philby, the central character of this work, was born into the British establishment. His father was a member of the British foreign service and served in India and Arabia. Kim Philby went to all the right schools and universities and had all the proper connections.

Drawn to Marxism as a university student, Philby was probably recruited as a Communist spy for Soviet Russia sometime during his student days or just after. Once he went over to the Reds, Philby posed as something of a right-winger and even covered the Spanish Civil War from the Franco side.

This "right-wing" image was what he needed to penetrate the British Secret Intelligence Service (SIS). So effective was Philby that in 1944 he was made director of the SIS's counter-Soviet department — a remarkable feat of duplicity that even a spy novelist, at the zenith of his imagination, would reject as too unbelievable.

Philby, a Russian spy, was head of the Soviet section of British intelligence. In this capacity, he was able to suppress a report that indicated German generals might dump Hitler if given a conditional surrender promise.

When the Cold War developed, Philby was in his element. Almost single-handedly, he betrayed every British and Allied effort to penetrate Communist Eastern Europe. Anti-Communist freedom-fighters were unfailingly picked up, instant-

exact landing-points. Philby was at work. Hundreds of East European freedom-fighters died without a prayer of success.

At one point, a leading Soviet security expert contacted British sources and offered to defect and hand over to the West priceless information about Soviet spies operating in Britain and other free world nations. Philby was the man sent to interview the Soviet expert, who shortly disappeared in a Soviet plane — before he had a chance to reveal a thing.

Later, Philby became the link-man between the British service and the American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). From this position, Philby was able to inform the Russians of virtually every important secret of Western intelligence.

After a 30-year career in British secret departments, an unparalleled career of betrayal, Philby escaped to Russia where he is still sometimes seen

walking about Red Square. He managed to elude the finally closing ring of British security at virtually the last minute.

Guy Burgess and David MacLean were Philby's confederates. Both these men were also sons of the British establishment; both did irreparable damage to the cause of the West, which included betraying some of America's top nuclear secrets to the Kremlin.

Philby was discreet, never hinting of his Communist sympathies; but Burgess and MacLean, in moments of drunken excitement, actually told people they were Communist agents. Apparently nobody believed this pair until much, much damage had been done.

How were these men able to get away with their treason for so long? The main reason, according to the authors of *The Philby Conspiracy*, is that their intelligence comrades, in spite of many indications, simply refused to believe that three of their number, upper middle-class and well-connected, could be capable of such treachery — until it was really too late.

As novelist John leCarre says in his introduction to the book, "None of us is yet equal to the dimensions of this scandal. Like a great novel, and an unfinished one at that, Kim Philby lives on in us."

Seeing a Communist behind every tree is self-defeating. But the story of these three spies, the unbelievable story of what they were able to do for Soviet Russia, should be a warning to those in and out our government who never see Red.

But let the authors point their own moral or lesson out of the Philby story. In closing, they say:

"... democracy cannot be defended by people who are themselves politically illiterate and naive. Philby, Burgess and MacLean all survived, essentially, because they passed so much of their careers amongst people who shared, in varying degrees, the comfortable assumption that it was permissible to ignore the ideologies which have altered the whole aspect of the twentieth century.

"All the Isms are Wasms," said the foreign Office spokesman with magnificent flippancy when the Nazi-Soviet pact was announced. But he was wrong: this remains a century in which people are moved by Isms. Philby and his friends have done enough to teach us the lesson. Only if we fail to understand it do they win."